DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 242 249 HE 017 112

AUTHOR Brown, Thomas J.
TITLE How to Choose a Board of Trustees.
PUB DATE 22 Oct 82
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association of Independent Colleges and Schools (New Orleans, LA, October 22, 1982).
PUB TYPE Guides - Non-Classroom Use (055)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Administrative Organization; *Advisory Committees; *Board Candidates; College Administration; *Governing Boards; Higher Education; Policy Formation; Selection; *Trustees

ABSTRACT

The nature of college governing boards and advisory boards and considerations for choosing board members are discussed. Governing boards are the kind found in nonprofit colleges and are the policy-making body of the college. Advisory boards are generally found in for-profit colleges and are used more on a programmatic basis usually tied to the curricula of the college. Points to address concerning advisory boards include the following: does the college executive officer seek advice of the board as a group or on an individualized basis, do members give advice, in what manner and with what attitude is advice dispensed, and are committees organized for this purpose? Before selecting new members, it is important to have in place organizational information concerning the responsibilities of the chairperson and committees. Attendance and other services expected of board members should be specified, the frequency and length of board meetings should be understood, agendas should be prepared, and procedures should be set for nominating new members. Reporting and the control responsibility of the board should also be established. (SW)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED242249

HOW TO CHOOSE A BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Presented To:

AICS CONVENTION
New Orleans, LA

October 22, 1982

Given By:

THOMAS J. BROWN
Vice President
Admissions & Development

DETROIT COLLEGE OF BUSINESS

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY

Thomas J. Brown

TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)

This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.

☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.

• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

NE 017 112

There are so many different possibilities involved in putting together a Board of Trustees. What I will try to do today is to list as many thought provoking ideas as possible. Since we have representation from both for-profit and non-profit colleges, the points will have different meanings.

Let us first assume two things, and they are: People like to serve on Boards of colleges. For many it is the peer recognition they seek. The other is that you'll never know if they'll serve on your Board unless you ask them.

Basically, there are two kinds of Boards: (1) Governing Board, and (2) Advisory Board.

GOVERNING BOARDS are the kind found in non-profit colleges and are the policy making body of the college.

ADVISORY BOARDS are usually found in for-profit colleges and are used more on a programatic basis usually tied to the curriculums of the college.

Let's look at some points relating to the Advisory Board:

1. Does the CEO seek advice of the Board as a group or on an individualized basis?
2. Does the description of the Board cover this role?
3. Do members give advice? If so, is it high quality?
4. In what manner and with what attitude is advice dispensed?
5. At whose request is it given?
6. Are committees--either standing or ad hoc--organized for this purpose?

The Advisory Board in a for-profit setting acts at the pleasure of the Board of Directors and/or the CEO. They are not compensated and really serve as volunteers. Their responsibilities can be very limited and typically, they do not have the same fiduciary responsibilities and consequently have little if any legal complications.

Because of the nature of the responsibilities of a Governing Board, the selection process is somewhat more detailed.

One of the most important aspects of a Governing Board is to make sure, in advance, the delineation of responsibilities between the board and management. Who does what? Where do responsibilities begin and end? Are there overlapping responsibilities? Are there exceptions? How are overlaps handled? Exceptions?

What categories of experience are wanted and needed most? Least? What are you really looking for? In the past, the criteria was 3 W's, Wisdom, Wealth, and Work. Today the criteria might be as follows:

1. Identify with the philosophy, mission, and values of the college.
2. Belief that private, higher education is important for individuals and society.
3. Demonstrate integrity in their own personal and professional lives and have achieved noteable success in their own calling.
4. Are highly respected in the community and will reflect credit on the college.
5. Will attend meetings with reasonable regularity. Will serve as public relations representatives and fund raisers.
6. Are willing to make the college one of their two or three most important volunteer activitiy, as measured by time and financial contribution.

Before selecting new members, it is very important to have in place organizational information because anyone who has served on other boards will certainly ask some of these questions. Is the number of board members controlled by by-laws? If not, what is an ideal number?

1. Who serves as chairman?
   A. Is there a job description for him?
   B. What is his role, and how is he expected to perform it?
   C. Does he understand the legal position of boards?
2. Do committees of the board function effectively?
   A. How many committees are there, and what areas do they oversee?
   B. Do they have written purposes or descriptions?
   C. Are agendas prepared in advance?
   D. Are minutes kept? By whom?
   E. Which committees report to the board and how do they report?
   F. Who appoints members, and for how long are they appointed?
   G. Who performs staff work for each committee?
3. Is there an overall job description for the board?
4. Are standards of performance spelled out?
5. What are qualifications or conditions for board membership?
   A. What attendance is expected?
   B. What other services are expected of members?
6. Is there a mandatory retirement age or maximum length of service?

Organization of Board Meetings

1. How often are meetings held?

2. How long do they last?

3. Are agendas prepared? By whom? Sent out in advance?

4. How is meeting organized? By management? By Chairman? Other?

Who nominates new members? Management? Nominating committee of board? Who screens nominees?

Once the new nominees have been screened and there are more names than vacancies, it is important to list by who you want first, second, third, etc. They should be approached in that manner unless one board member will only consent if someone else comes on the board too.

Someone should then discuss with the candidates their willingness to serve on the board. Both acceptances and rejections are then reported to the Board of Trustees.

Before any meetings are held, it is important to establish the control responsibility of the board.

1. Are control areas specific?

2. Is there a mechanism for reporting and control?

3. Does the board have a formal method of evaluating the CEO?

4. What methods are used to educate board members so they can carry out control?

5. Does board understand its role for ensuring quality education?

Helpful Hints:

1. Hold an orientation session for new members.

   A. History of college.

   B. Mission - Where do we plan to go!

   C. What is expected of them.

   D. Philisophical tendencies.

2. Always remind board about the "good old days", in particular if you struggled for survival and then became fiscally sound.